

THE LITERARY GUARDIAN,

And Spectator of

BOOKS, FINE ARTS, PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS, AND FASHIONS.

No. 17.]

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1832.

[Price 2d.

Spectator of Books.

NATIONAL TRAGEDIES.

Britain's Historical Drama; a Series of National Tragedies, intended to illustrate the Manners, Customs, and Religious Institutions of different early Eras in Britain. By J. F. Pennie. Samuel Maunder.

THIS series consists of four tragedies, all relating to the earliest periods of Saxon history, which we suppose it is the intention of the author to continue to more modern times, should the present volume meet with sufficient encouragement. We more than doubt whether this will be the case,—first, because, notwithstanding Mr. Pennie's declaration to the contrary, the drama, in all its walks, and with all its appurtenances, is at the present day woefully in abeyance;—secondly, because the drama is overstocked with historical tragedies, especially of early date;—and, thirdly, which assertion we advance with deference and with all kindly feeling, the tragedies with which Mr. Pennie has here favoured us, do not appear of a merit to claim a very high or lasting stand, either on the score of poetry or scenic perfection. Mr. Pennie appears to be gifted with a very fair proportion of enthusiasm, an easy flow of high-sounding language, a very pretty capability for plot, and some feeling for an effective *coup de théâtre*, or, more properly, as our "major-legitimates" style it, "a picture;" but of true poetry, his pen, to judge from these tragedies, is wholly deficient. Nevertheless, they have considerable merit, and might easily be "cut down" and "heightened up" into somewhat effective stage melo-dramas; while the thoughtless reader, who likes to swing through a dashing page of well-turned couplets, occasionally interrupted by the startling intricacies of interjection and stage direction, but not otherwise much encumbered with imagery or thought, may find himself amused and improved by the picture they give of ancient manners and ceremonies.

Mr. Pennie is almost equally exuberant in his prose as in his poetry, and sometimes more picturesque and imaginative.

We take, for instance, the first lines of the preface, where he informs us that—"The following tragedies are intended to form a portion of a national dramatic work; not merely devoted to the purposes of illustrating certain particular

events, which stand like *lofty and isolated rocks amid the downward rolling stream of British history*, but also to display a faithful picture of the manners, customs," &c.

This same figure is differently treated a little further on, where we are promised "a diorama of those great changes which have taken place and followed each other, with regard to dynasties, manners, and religious institutions, during a long succession of years, *down which has descended the turbulent stream of our national annals.*"

Our first tragedy is that of "Arixina," a priestess of the sun, who, false to her professions and her vows, is called upon, by maternal feelings, to tend another son but that which should have been the one only god of her idolatry. It is a noisy play, having the second plot of *Cæsar's* re-landing in England, and the battles thence ensuing. The author is fond of epithets both loud and long, and when he cannot find one of proportions sufficient, he too frequently tacks them together in couples, thus:—"Joy-yielding voice,"—"a lake forest-embosomed, whose weed-covered surface tempests nor sunlight visits," &c.

Mr. Pennie is too apt to follow the old conventional method of introducing an important personage. Thus *Cæsar*, though he has been time enough on shore, at least, to establish his camp, enters with the set speech of—

"Once more we plant our footsteps on these shores," &c.

So, also, in the next piece, "Edwin and Elgiva," *St. Dunstan* comes on the scene proclaiming:—

"Again I move in England's regal court."

One of the principal scenes in "Arixina" is where, at the time of sacrificing, her infant son is brought in to the bloody conclave:—

"Enter a Druid, with a young boy in his arms, followed by two or three other Druids."

DRUID.

Great father of our order, we have found, Gathering the wild flowers of the wood, this child.

He greatly seemed alarmed, and said, when questioned,

He from his mother's bower had run to catch His favourite bird that from its cage had flown,

But no one knows or owns him.

ARCH-DRUID.

Then he is ours.—

A pleasing sacrifice—(Taking the child in his arms.)

He shall be given

This day unto the sun—'tis fit great Melcom At such a time should also have due worship.

ARIXINA.

(Perceiving the boy)—Eternal gods! have mercy!—

O Dalthula,

It is, it is my son!

DALTHULA.

Ah, dearest lady,

Conceal your agonies, or you are lost!

(Arixina advances towards the Arch-Druid tremblingly, drawing her veil so as to conceal her face from the child.)

ARIXINA.

It is impossible!—Most sacred sire,

Let me for that sweet innocent entreat—

Do not, O, do not take his guiltless life:

He is no captive, nor a foe to Britain.

Plunge not yon blood-distilling blade of death

In his sweet bosom,—Thus on bended knee

I do implore thee spare him—give him up

To these extended arms; let me protect

That beautiful, that innocent child from harm.

ARCH-DRUID.

What! a high-priestess of the sun to rob

Her god of such an offering? monstrous thought!

A sacrilege to heaven's all-radiant king!

ARIXINA.

Nay, mercy, mercy to that friendless child!

He cannot for himself thy pity crave;

Then hear me for him plead—

ARCH-DRUID.

Away with him!

What means this earnestness for a strange boy

Whom no one owns?

ARIXINA.

He weeps—a supplicating tear

Falls from his radiant eye upon this bosom.

And wilt thou, canst thou have the ruthless heart

To doom him to the sacrificer's knife,

And be the murderer of so sweet a child!

Ah! (shrieks.) What have I said?—O pardon, pardon me,

Most holy sire,—my brain, my bursting brain

Burns with the flames of madness!

ARCH-DRUID.

By great Bell,

There is some fatal mystery in this!

Th' high-priestess raves!—Take her, ye virgins, hence.

ARIXINA.

No, no, I'll never leave thee while I've strength

Thus, thus to hold thee fast, till thou hast given

That infant to these arms.

ARCH-DRUID.

Give him to thee!

Would'st thou defile the sun's most holy rites

With earthly feelings of a mother's love ?
Shall these pure virgins see upon the bosom
Of their high-priestess nursed, a child, and
hear
Her call him son?—O, infamy accursed!
He shall this instant die!

ARIXINA.

O, take my life
For his—I'll be the bleeding sacrifice—
I will not let thee go—thus to thy knees
I cling for mercy—let me for him die—
I'll be a willing victim to that god
Before whose fire I minister; so thou
Wilt bid that infant live.

ARCH-DRUID.

Thou for him die?

ARIXINA.

(*Unguardedly flinging back her veil.*)
Aye, in this bosom plunge deep to
life's core

The blood-stained knife of death! burn me
alive
Amid yon sparkling flames; but spare, O
spare
This innocent child!

UTHYR.

(*Shrieks at seeing Arixina.*) Ah, mother!
mother!
Save me, O save me from these dreadful
men!

ALL THE CHARACTERS.

(*With astonishment and terror.*) Mother!

ARCH-DRUID.

Pollution! infamy! and horror!

ARIXINA.

No, no, I'm not his mother—No, ye chiefs,
Ye kings, ye awful ministers of heaven,
He is no son of mine!—torments and racks!
I know him not!—Distraction, hell, and
darkness!

UTHYR.

O, yes you are my mother—dearest mother,
Save me, and take me, as you used to do,
With kisses to your bosom.

ARIXINA.

Ah! believe him not!
'Tis false!—The flames of hell are blazing
round me!
Guilt adds to guilt—these are the fruits of
crime.
Where can I turn for mercy!—(*Aside.*)

ARCH-DRUID.

(*About to give the boy to the sacrificer.*)

Bear him hence,

To instant death!

ARIXINA.

Off! touch him not! he is
A prince's son!—Come to these arms, my
child—(*Snatching Uthyr from the Arch-
Druid.*)

Alas, my boy! thou hast declared the truth,
And I am stained with falsehood and with
shame!

With guilt, deep, dreadful guilt!—I know
my doom;

Together we will die, if die he must,—
I'll perish with my son!

Description of the youthful sacrifice:—

ARIXINA.

"Ah! I behold him now! my child, my
child!
I see the priest conduct him from his cave,

A victim to the sun, a victim for
His guilty mother's crimes! My sin hath
brought

Destruction on his head.—O, it is I
That am his murderer!—It maddens me!—
Ah! now I see him on the altar laid!
I see him blackening in the horrid flames,
Writhing in agonies! His last death screams
Ring in my ears!—Distraction! furies!
fiends!

I'll snatch him from those hellish fires, ye
priests,

Ha!—(*Shrieks.*)

There's nothing but a heap of burning bones!
They crumble into dust!—Oh, mercy!—
mercy!—"
(*Falls on the ground.*)

The story of Edwin and Elgiva, with
its horrible catastrophe, is well known;
it is effectively dramatised here, as far as
stirring incident goes, and of the language
we can only take a few short specimens:—

"ELGIVA.

(*Shrieking.*) Ha! save me! save me!
My lord, my king; let me not lose my hold—
Oh, dreadful! dreadful!"

Again:—

"See, they come to stamp,
In burning characters, upon my brow,
That horrid mark of shame; and I, though
guiltless,

Must bear it, as I wander through the world,
Like the first homicide. Ha! ha! ha! ha!"

The escape of Elgiva:—

"Scene IV—A rocky Mountain-gorge, co-
vered with forest-trees. A waterfall and
torrent: a narrow plank thrown across the
cataract from rock to rock. A noise be-
hind, with shrieks and clashing of swords.

Enter Elgiva, greatly alarmed, in a plain
dress, with a scarf bound on her forehead,
and her robes disordered. She ascends the
rocks towards the bridge.

ELGIVA.

Mercy defend me!

Where shall I fly for safety? Those who led
Me on to exile, through these frightful
woods,

By fell brigands assaulted, all are fled,
Or, weltering in their blood, with death-
pangs writhe!

I have escaped, amid the strife of swords,
But am pursued by those wild forest rovers,
And further flight is barred!—Ye saints, look
down

In mercy on me.—Ah, a narrow bridge!

Could I but cross it, I might shun their
search,

And hide me in some cave or leafy bower.
O, what a fearful height!—A dizziness
Comes o'er me at the sight!—Ha, they are
here!

Enter Redwolfgar and three Robbers.

O, blessed Virgin, aid my trembling steps!

REDWOLFGAR.

Follow her quickly, ere she cross the bridge,
Or we, amid the mazes of this forest,
May lose the lovely prize.

Elgiva crosses the bridge with great trepida-
tion; the three Robbers reach it just as she
gets on the other side. As they run across,
the bridge breaks, and they all fall into
the torrent of the chasm, and are seen no

more. Elgiva lifts her hands in thanks to
Heaven, and disappears among the rocks.

By hell! there go

Three of the bravest spirits in my band!"

A robber-like conversation:—

"4TH ROBBER.

Slay all all who join not with us in the work
Of general plunder!—Crush all rule and
power!—

1ST ROBBER.

Except our own—Down with authority!—
Rob priest and layman!—

2D ROBBER.

Pillage!

3D ROBBER.

Burn!

4TH ROBBER.

Lay waste!

1ST ROBBER.

Death!

2D ROBBER.

Blood!

3D ROBBER.

Destruction!—

ALL.

Hurrah! freedom! liberty, and plunder!

[*Exeunt.*]

From the above extracts our readers
may form their own notions of the general
style and merit of these productions.
We have been much pleased with several
pretty little passages, of which we can
only quote one. Claudia, talking of Cym-
beline, whom she loves, says:—

"Yet 'tis bliss,

A bliss which none can feel but such as love
With that unbounded passion I have done,
To look but on his shadow, as he moves,
A war-god in the sun, whose beams I envy
As they the plumes of his white helmet kiss!"

The other two pieces are named the
"Imperial Pirate," and the "Dragon
King." The observations elicited by a
perusal of the former performances will
equally apply to them.

THE SCIENCE OF TIPPLING.

The Anatomy of Drunkenness. By Robert
Macnish. Fourth Edition. Glasgow.
M'Phun.

THE "Anatomy of Drunkenness,"—what
a subject! Here is that arch monster,
the "enemy," which men "put in their
mouths to steal away their wits," securely
captured by the strong hand of Reason,
stripped of all its false allurements and
disguises, and bound hand and foot to the
dissecting table of Common Sense, where,
with acute research and cutting sarcasm,
Mr. Macnish lays bare the hideous struc-
ture of this nonentity,—its nerveless
and misshapen limbs, its animal functions
rotten to the core, its mental powers be-
come powerless, or rioting in a melan-
choly delirium.

This little book offers matter for specu-
lation to the moralist, the philosopher, the
prudent man, and the debauchee of every
age and class. Drunkenness is dragged
forth from all its favourite haunts;—from

the overflowing tables of the rich, and the miserable darkness of squalid poverty; from the melancholy student's midnight retreat, and the midnight orgies of the reckless man of pleasure;—in all its various shapes and forms—of wine, spirits, and malt; and in all its various stages of elation, insubordination, and degradation, is it brought before us.

"The consequences of drunkenness are dreadful, but the pleasures of getting drunk are certainly ecstatic. While the illusion lasts, happiness is complete; care and melancholy are thrown to the wind; and Elysium, with all its glories, descends upon the dazzled imagination of the drinker.

"Some authors have spoken of the pleasures of being completely drunk: this, however, is not the most exquisite period. The time is when a person is neither 'drunken nor sober, but neighbour to both,' as Bishop Andrews says in his 'Ex—ale—tation of Ale.' The moment is when the ethereal emanations begin to float around the brain—when the soul is commencing to expand its wings and rise from earth—when the tongue feels itself somewhat loosened in the mouth, and breaks the previous taciturnity, if any such existed.

"What are the sensations of insipient drunkenness? First, an unusual serenity prevails over the mind, and the soul of the votary is filled with a placid satisfaction. By degrees he is sensible of a soft and not unmusical humming in his ears, at every pause of the conversation. He seems, to himself, to wear his head lighter than usual upon his shoulders. Then a species of obscurity, thinner than the finest mist, passes before his eyes, and makes him see objects rather indistinctly. The lights begin to dance and appear double. A gaiety and warmth are felt at the same time about the heart. The imagination is expanded, and filled with a thousand delightful images. He becomes loquacious, and pours forth, in enthusiastic language, the thoughts which are born, as it were, within him.

"Now comes a spirit of universal contentment with himself and all the world. He thinks no more of misery: it is dissolved in the bliss of the moment. This is the acme of the fit—the ecstasy is now perfect. As yet the sensorium is in tolerable order: it is only shaken, but the capability of thinking with accuracy still remains. About this time, the drunkard pours out all the secrets of his soul. His qualities, good or bad, come forth without reserve; and now, if at any time, the human heart may be seen into. In a short period, he is seized with a most inordinate propensity to talk nonsense, though he is perfectly conscious of doing so. He also commits many foolish things, knowing them to be foolish. The power of volition, that faculty which keeps the will su-

bordinate to the judgment, seems totally weakened. The most delightful time seems to be that immediately before becoming very talkative. When this takes place, a man turns ridiculous, and his mirth, though more boisterous, is not so exquisite. At first the intoxication partakes of sentiment, but, latterly, it becomes merely animal."

So much for the unreal charms of this evil genius of mankind, now for its real hideousness in all its terrible array:—

"After this the scene thickens. The drunkard's imagination gets disordered with the most grotesque conceptions. Instead of moderating his drink, he pours it down more rapidly than ever: glass follows glass with reckless energy. His head becomes perfectly giddy. The candles burn blue, or green, or yellow; and where there are perhaps only three on the table, he sees a dozen. According to his temperament, he is amorous, or musical, or quarrelsome. Many possess a most extraordinary wit; and a great flow of spirits is a general attendant. In the latter stages, the speech is thick, and the use of the tongue in a great measure lost. His mouth is half open, and idiotic in the expression; while his eyes are glazed, wavering, and watery. He is apt to fancy that he has offended some one of the company, and is ridiculously profuse with his apologies. Frequently he mistakes one person for another, and imagines that some of those before him are individuals who are, in reality, absent, or even dead. The muscular powers are, all along, much affected: this indeed happens before any great change takes place in the mind, and goes on progressively increasing. He can no longer walk with steadiness, but totters from side to side. The limbs become powerless, and inadequate to sustain his weight. He is, however, not always sensible of any deficiency in this respect: and while exciting mirth by his eccentric motions, imagines that he walks with the most perfect steadiness. In attempting to run, he conceives that he passes over the ground with astonishing rapidity. To his distorted eyes all men, and even inanimate nature itself, seem to be drunken, while he alone is sober. Houses reel from side to side as if they had lost their balance; trees and steeples nod like tipsy Bacchanals; and the very earth seems to slip from under his feet, and leave him walking and floundering upon the air. The last stage of drunkenness is total insensibility. The man tumbles perhaps beneath the table, and is carried away in a state of stupor to his couch. In this condition he is said to be *dead drunk*.

"When the drunkard is put to bed, let us suppose that his faculties are not totally absorbed in apoplectic stupor; let us suppose that he still possesses consciousness and feeling, though these are both disordered; then begins 'the tug of war;' then

comes the misery which is doomed to succeed his previous raptures. No sooner is his head laid upon the pillow, than it is seized with the strangest throbbing. His heart beats quick and hard against the ribs. A noise like the distant fall of a cascade, or rushing of a river, is heard in his ears: *sough—sough—sough*, goes the sound. His senses now become more drowned and stupified. A dim recollection of his carousals, like a shadowy and indistinct dream, passes before the mind. He still hears, as in echo, the cries and laughter of his companions. Wild fantastic fancies accumulate thickly around the brain. His giddiness is greater than ever; and he feels as if in a ship tossed upon a heaving sea. At last he drops insensibly into a profound slumber.

"In the morning he awakes in a high fever. The whole body is parched; the palms of the hands, in particular, are like leather. His head is often violently painful. He feels excessive thirst; while his tongue is white, dry, and stiff. The whole inside of the mouth is likewise hot and constricted, and the throat often sore. Then look at his eyes—how sickly, dull, and languid! The fire, which first lighted them up the evening before, is all gone. A stupor like that of the last stage of drunkenness, still clings about them, and they are disagreeably affected by the light. The complexion sustains as great a change: it is no longer flushed with gaiety and excitement, but pale and way-worn, indicating a profound mental and bodily exhaustion. There is probably sickness, and the appetite is totally gone. Even yet the delirium of intoxication has not left him, for his head still rings, his heart still throbs violently; and if he attempt getting up, he stumbles with giddiness. The mind also is sadly depressed, and the proceedings of the previous night are painfully remembered. He is sorry for his conduct, promises solemnly never again so to commit himself, and calls impatiently for something to quench his thirst. Such are the usual phenomena of a fit of drunkenness."

This little volume contains, besides many entertaining and amusing sketches, a vast quantity of good worldly advice, both preventative and curative, to tipplers, including several interesting details as to the respective deleterious effects of the several drugs with which men find pleasure to poison themselves by way of killing time. We make a few random extracts:—

Substituted Excitements.—"Dr. Johnson fled for years to wine under his habitual gloom. He found that the pangs were removed while its immediate influence lasted, but he also found that they returned with double force when [that influence passed away. He saw the dangerous precipice on which he stood, and by an unusual effort of volition, gave it over.

In its stead he substituted tea; and to this milder stimulus had recourse in his melancholy. Voltaire and Fontenelle, for the same purpose, used coffee. The excitements of Newton and Hobbes were the fumes of tobacco, while Demosthenes and Haller were sufficiently stimulated by drinking freely of cold water."

A Hint to Drinkers.—"A person who wishes to stand out well, should never talk much. This increases the effects of the liquor, and hurries on intoxication. Hence, every experienced drunkard holds it to be a piece of prudence to keep his tongue under restraint."

A Hint to Lookers-on.—"No one should ever presume on the intoxicated state of another, to talk of him detractingly in his presence. While apparently deprived of all sensation, he may be an attentive listener; and whatever is said, though unheeded at the moment, is not forgotten afterwards, but treasured carefully up in the memory." (Like the frozen words in Munchausen's speaking trumpet, which only wait the appointed time of a "general thaw," to make themselves heard!)

Lord Stanhope's Calculation about Snuff-taking.—"Every professed, inveterate, and incurable snuff-taker, at a moderate computation, takes one pinch in ten minutes. Every pinch, with the agreeable ceremony of blowing and wiping the nose, and other incidental circumstances, consumes a minute and a half. One minute and a half out of every ten, allowing sixteen hours to a snuff-taking day, amounts to two hours and twenty-four minutes out of every natural day, or one day out of ten. One day out of every ten, amounts to thirty-six days and a half in a year. Hence, if we suppose the practice to be persisted in forty years, two entire years of the snuff-taker's life will be dedicated to tickling his nose, and two more to blowing it. The expense of snuff, snuff-boxes, and handkerchiefs, will be the subject of a second essay, in which it will appear that this luxury encroaches as much on the income of the snuff-taker as it does on his time; and that by proper application of the time and money thus lost to the public, a fund might be constituted for the discharge of the national debt."

A Set-down for Cigar-Smokers.—"At the present moment, smoking is fashionable, and crowds of young men are to be seen at all hours walking the streets with cigars in their mouths, annoying the passengers. They seem to consider it manly to be able to smoke a certain number, without reflecting that there is scarcely an old woman in the country who would not beat them to naught with their own weapons, and that they would gain no sort of honour were they able to out-smoke all the burgomasters of Amsterdam. As the practice, however, seems more resorted to by these young gentlemen for

the sake of effect, and of exhibiting a little of the *haut ton*, than for any thing else, it is likely soon to die a natural death among them; particularly as jockeys and porters have lately taken the field in the same way, being determined that no class of the community shall enjoy the exclusive monopoly of street-smoking."

We were somewhat amused at meeting, after a chapter on "Temperance Societies," some "advice to inveterate drunkards," beginning thus:—"If a man is resolved to continue a drunkard, it may be here proper to mention in what manner he can do so with least risk to himself." The rules prescribed appear satisfactory enough, and, we doubt not, will be abundantly studied, and duly acted upon.

THE GARRICK PAPERS.

The Private Correspondence of David Garrick with the most celebrated Persons of his Time. Vol. II. Colburn and Bentley.

HAVING already expressed our opinion as to the general value of such publications, we now make a point of inserting one or two more of these letters without further comment.

Our first is a lively epistle from "Kitty Clive," on Garrick's retiring from the stage:—

"Mrs. C. Clive to Mr. Garrick.

"Twickenham, Jan. 23, 1776.

"Dear sir,—Is it really true, that you have put an end to the glory of Drury-lane theatre? *if it is so*, let me congratulate my dear Mr. and Mrs. Garrick on their approaching happiness: *I know* what it will be; you cannot yet have an idea of it; *but* if you should still be so wicked not to be satisfied with that *unbounded*, uncommon degree of fame you have received as an actor, and which no other actor ever did receive—nor no other actor ever *can* receive;—I say, if you should still long to be dipping your fingers in their theatrical pudding (now without plums), you will be no Garrick for the pivy. In the height of the public admiration for you, when you were never mentioned with any other appellation than the Garrick, the charming man, the fine fellow, the delightful creature, both by men and ladies; when they were admiring every thing you did, and every thing you scribbled, at this very time, *I, the pivy*, was a living witness that they did not know, nor could they be sensible, of half your perfections. I have seen you, with your magical hammer in your hand, *endeavouring* to beat your ideas into the heads of creatures who had none of their own—I have seen you, with lamb-like patience, endeavouring to make them comprehend you; and I have seen you, when that could not be done—I have seen your lamb turned into a lion: by this your great labour and pains the public

was entertained; *they* thought they all acted very fine—they did not see you pull the wires. There are people *now* on the stage to whom you gave their consequence; they think themselves very great; now let them go on in their new parts without your leading-strings, and they will soon convince the world what their genius is; I have always said this to every body, even when your horses and mine were in their highest prancing. While I was under your control, I did not say half the fine things I thought of you, because it looked like flattery; and you know your pivy was always proud: besides, I thought you did not like me then; but *now* I am sure you do, which makes me send you this letter. What a strange jumble of people they have put in the papers as the purchasers of the patent! I thought I should have died with laughing when I saw a man-midwife amongst them; I suppose they have taken him in to prevent miscarriages. I have some opinion of Mr. Sheridan, as I hear every body say he is very sensible; then he has a divine wife, and I loved his mother dearly. Pray give my love to my dear Mrs. Garrick; we all join in that. Your Jemmy is out of his wits with joy and grief; he rejoices at your escape, and cries from wanting to make his own to London; it is dreadful here, but I believe it is much worse there. Pray send me a line to let me know how you do, and how the world goes; for we are rather dull, though my neighbours do pick their way to come and see me. I have since the snow been once out in my carriage; did you not hear me scream?"

Previous to which we ought by rights to have placed the following manager's lecture, intended for the edification of Mrs. Abington:—

"Mr. Garrick to Mrs. Abington.

"Hampton, Jan. 28th, 1775.

"Madame,—The famous French writer Fontenelle, takes notice, that nothing is so difficult to a man of sensibility as writing to a lady, even with just grounds of complaint. However, having promised, I must answer your last very extraordinary note. You accuse me of incivility for writing to you through Mr. Hopkins. Did not Mrs. Abington first begin that mode of correspondence? and, without saying a word to me, did she not send back her part in the new comedy, and say that she had settled that matter with Mr. Cumberland? Could a greater affront be offered to any manager? And was not your proposing to Mr. Hopkins that you would speak my epilogue written for the character, while *another person* was to perform the part, not only mere mockery of me, but destroying the play at once? Let your warmest and most partial friend decide between us. Whenever you are really ill, I feel both for you and myself; but the servant said, last Wednesday, that you *were well and had a deal of company*.

"You mention *your great fatigue*. What is the stage come to, if I must continually hear of your *hard labour*, when, from the beginning of the season to this time, you have not played more than twice a week!

"Mrs. Oldfield performed Lady Townly for twenty-nine nights successively. Let us now examine how just and genteel your complaint is against me. I promised you that I would procure a character of consequence to be written on purpose for you, and that it should be your own fault, if you were not on the highest pinnacle of your profession. I have been at great pains, and you know it, to be as good as my word.

"I directed and assisted the author to make a small character a very considerable one for you; I spared no expense in dresses, music, scenes, and decorations for the piece; and now, the *fatigue of acting* this character is very unjustly, as well as unkindly, brought against me.

"Had you played this part *forty* times instead of *twenty*, my gains would be less than by any other successful play I have produced in my management.

"The greatest favour I can confer upon an actress is to give her the best character in a favourite piece; and the longer it runs, the more merit I have with her, and ought to receive her *thanks* instead of *complaints*. In short, madam, *if you play*, you are uneasy, and if you *do not*, you are more so. After what you said to Mr. Becket, and what I promised, I little thought to have your *face* drawn in to make up the bundle of complaints. However, to make an end of this disagreeable business, as the piece is written out, I am now ready to do it, and that you may have Palmer, I will give up the revived comedy; but even this, I know, will not satisfy you—nor can you fix in your mind *what will*.

"Were I to look back, what *real* complaints have I to make for leading me into a fool's paradise last summer about a certain comedy! and an alarming secret you told me lately of a disagreeable quarrel. On my return home the same morning, I met one of the parties; and, instead of a quarrel between them, they were upon the best terms, had never had the least difference, and Mr. M. [Murphy] was writing, at Mr. T's [Tighe's] desire, a prologue for his friend's [Jephson's] new tragedy.

"Mr. Garrick most solemnly assures Mrs. Abington, that nobody has in the least influenced him in this affair, and he hopes the above recital will convince her of the truth of his assertion.

"I am, madam,

"Your most obedient servant,

"D. GARRICK."

"Endorsed:—This letter to Mrs. Abington was not sent."

One of the most interesting and really valuable documents contained in this volume is one from Garrick, giving an account of his farewell performance:—

"Mr. Garrick to Madame Necker.

"Hampton, June 18, 1776.

"Madam,—I cannot say whether I am most happy or distressed by your very elegant and affectionate letter: such a sincerity of praise from such a lady has added a cubit to my stature; but the self-conviction I have, that I cannot answer it as such a letter ought to be answered, makes me miserable. I defy the whole French Academy, with my most critical and worthy friend Sicard at their head, to give such power to words as you have done; nor is it in their power to lower the joy of my mind, or the pride of my heart, from the present exalted state you have raised them to. Though every poet was a Voltaire, and every proseman a Rousseau, I now defy the devil of criticism and all his works. I can say with our Waller,

'She smiled, and from her smiles were sped
Such darts as struck the monster dead.'

I flatter myself that you will not be displeased to know, that I departed my theatrical life on Monday, the 10th of June,—it was, indeed, a sight very well worth seeing! Though I performed my part with as much, if not more spirit than I ever did, yet when I came to take the last farewell, I not only lost almost the use of my voice, but of my limbs too; it was, indeed, as I said, *a most awful moment*. You would not have thought an English audience void of feeling if you had then seen and heard them. After I had left the stage, and was dead to them, they would not suffer the *petite piece* to go on; nor would the actors perform, they were so affected; in short, the public was very generous, and I am most grateful. Mrs. Garrick, who has taken your letter from me by force and keeps it locked up, begs to join her most affectionate respects with mine to you and Mr. Necker. If my multiplicity of business would permit, I should be at your feet almost as soon as this reaches your hands; but we have made a vow to be happy as soon as our worldly cares will permit us; till when, we beg that our warmest and best wishes may be presented to your fellow-traveller, the Chevalier Chatteaux, and all our friends; we never can forget them or your most flattering kindness."

A word of compliment and consolation from

"Sir James Marriott to Mr. Garrick.

"College of Advocates, Doctors'
Commons, July 6, 1776.

"Sir,—When I met you a few days ago, it was with singular pleasure I saw a man who had just departed this stage look so wonderfully well. You have had the philosophy to resign thrones and diadems in good time and with good grace; a great exit is every thing; and I hope now you will have philosophy enough never to repent it; as the few kings and

emperors in history, who have resigned, I fear always have done. Your epitaph may be almost as short as Ben Jonson's; it may be said of you, 'He followed Nature and he died.' You must have one great satisfaction in reflecting that you will always live in the minds and memories of your countrymen and in their history, while the world of arts and letters shall exist; and that, till you really quit for the true last time the scene, the respect you will meet with from all orders of men will alleviate many a pain and many a chagrin. Your countrymen have been too long inspired by you with exalted sentiments, and been relieved by your vivacity and fire from the weight of their blood and atmosphere, ever to forget the obligations they owe to you. Although you lay aside the dagger and the sceptre, the sock and the buskin, you still hold your pen; if you use it, it will contribute to keep you in health and spirits, and to give life to others. Continue then to adorn the scene with your wit, which you have filled so greatly with your action. You cannot leave the world, nor will it leave you. Upon the conversation turning some time ago, in company, upon your then intended retirement, it was proposed to try some short verses upon this subject. The following are in this sentiment, composed *sur le champ*—but I fear they will hardly make you amends for the heavy ecclesiastical law which I sent you:—

"Garrick retires—whence?—from the world
—and whither?

Not from the world, for they have lived together.

In fame, in nature, and the muses' eye,
Who live together must together die."

A remonstratory letter from

"Mr. Garrick to Lord Camden.

"Hampton, Sept. 16th, 1777.

"My good lord,—It is observed by a French writer, that many things which seem severe, if spoken as a joke, will pass as such, but that they grow serious by repetition. Your lordship has long (jokingly as I thought and hoped) been pleased to twit me with a wavering in that faith in which I have lived with pleasure and wish to die. Though this want of virtue in me, (for, if true, it certainly would be so,) hath been often repeated; yet still, being a great laughter myself, I always looked upon it as mere pleasantry, and rather as an ironical compliment than any thing else; and yet the message brought me by Mr. Palmer, of Bath, has made me half consider the matter as a kind of reproach, which of course will make me a little serious. Whenever I cannot have the honour as usual, and which I flattered myself would be annual at least, of seeing Lord and Lady Camden, and the Miss Pratts, at Hampton, I am sincerely disappointed; but at the same

time am bound to believe, for my own credit, that other engagements prevent my happiness. Your journey into Kent to Mr. Pratt, and the expectation of Mrs. Stewart, were urged to soften my disappointment this summer. To make the fall as easy as possible, I begged of Lady Camden that Miss Pratt might pass a few days with us—impossible; to give me some small satisfaction for this refusal, I was told that I should know when Mrs. Stewart came, that I might pay my respects at Chisselhurst. I hear that lady has been arrived more than a fortnight, in which time I wrote to your lordship upon other matters, but received neither answer nor notice of the lady's being arrived. Mrs. G. and I have endeavoured to put off our Welsh journey to Sir Watkin, and imagined his being at Brighton with Miss Grenville would have brought it to bear; but all my wishes on that account are frustrated by the enclosed letter, which will oblige us to go immediately to Litchfield, where my family expects me, and a marriage to be soon completed between a niece of mine and a gentleman in the neighbourhood. Let me assure your lordship, from the sincerity of my heart, that our going without paying our respects at Chisselhurst is very mortifying to us; but I cannot agree that this mortification proceeds from my want of gratitude, taste, or attention, nor from any other cause but your lordship's total neglect of me in this business, or rather having something better to think of. Your lordship calls me a courtier. If I am a courtier, it is without interest or prospect of interest. I have friends who are both in and out of place, and I hope that my conduct to both is without reproach. The greatest man shall not speak ill of my friend without some decent reprehension; and some opinions I have that my greatest friend cannot alter. I have many weaknesses, but I hope among the number I can never be seriously accused of want of the most affectionate and steady fidelity and attachment to Lord Camden and his family.

"I am, ever was, and ever shall be your lordship's most faithful servant,

"D. GARRICK."

A "Garrick Paper," which does not in the slightest degree relate to or of Garrick!—

"Mr. A. Wallis to Mr. Garrick.

"Robston Hall, Aug. 22d, 1777.

"Dear sir,—(mind that,)—You have heard from the *niece* how we journeyed from the Adelphi to Bath, and of the dangers she escaped from thunder, lightening, rain, and spirits (of brandy) between Bath and Bristol, after her elopement from her fellow-traveller. Now you will expect to hear of the dangers I have passed, and the hair-breadth escapes in the dreadful Welsh precipices; how I have been taken by the friendly foe, and imprisoned whole days and nights, fed upon nothing but

fish, venison, claret, and Welsh ale, in the finest country in the world. All these to hear will make your mouth water. Wales, for variety and beauty of scenery, plenty, and conveniency, exceeds every place which has come within my ken. From my leaving Bristol to this place, I was scarce ever more than five miles distant from the sea, and never half an hour out of its sight, which, with mountains, rocks, rivers, cataracts, castles, valleys, &c. &c. form the most delightful of countries. I am now in Milford Haven, at a good inn, after the manner of that at Hampton; my landlord keeps a yacht for the amusement of his guests. He took me a cruise into a thousand creeks; we hailed as many vessels, and took twice that number of prisoners, such as johndories, mullets, brets, &c., which, according to the ancient laws and customs of Wales, we ate alive; and conformable to more modern customs introduced from England, drink our claret, eat our pines, grapes, cherries, &c., all of the captain's own manufacture; and in the evening returned to our inn, where I am again a close prisoner, unable to pay my ransom, or to make my escape. I wish you and Pen, and my fair niece, would come to my relief, or you will lose my custom at Hampton. This country affords remedies for all complaints, as you will see by the enclosed, which my landlord sends you with his compliments, and an offer of his inn for your accommodation. He is a very civil, obliging man; keeps a good larder; has laid in a large stock of the best wines, which he perfectly understands the management of, tastes them all himself; pays the utmost attention to his guests, whether they drink wine, sea-water, or —, as I have experienced. In short, he is very clever in his way, having been long in business, and can only be excelled by the politeness of my two landladies, who, to their perfect knowledge in the management of the public business of the inn, add the benevolence of administering health to their neighbours; but they have by that means introduced a most barbarous custom into the country, of not giving burial to the dead, under 100 years of age, for which reason the people never begin to be sick till 99. The consequence is, the ladies are worshipped as divinities, the churchyard lies fallow, and the sexton is ruined, and must either dig a grave for himself, or lie above-ground. His place, not like the places at St. James's, is not even solicited for; nor will any one accept it, unless the parson take it as a sinecure, and then he must take the burial fees at the time of baptism, or he too will be ruined. I have seen Newton, which commands the finest view in the Haven. But this is not the Newton whose landlord you are acquainted with, and which every one says is not to be equalled. The landlord of that Newton and this inn give each

other a character; they drive to each other's houses, which are both pretty decent Welsh inns, make very reasonable bills, and have met with great encouragement from, and are well known to, the noblemen and gentlemen travelling this road. They hope for your custom as you pass this way, having already secured that of your friend,

A. WALLIS."

With this our extracts must, for the present, conclude.

THE ANTI-REFORMER. "A Tale."
New Monthly Magazine for January.
Colburn and Bentley.

WE took occasion some weeks ago to animadvert rather harshly upon a certain contemptible effusion of catch-penny ingenuity, entitled the "Victim," which had been palmed upon the pages of a former number of *The New Monthly Magazine*. To show that we have no ill will towards any of the parties concerned in that publication; and to prove our ability to enjoy a good timely bagatelle, when it does not militate against good taste or breeding, we now with pleasure extract the greater portion of a clever and well-written article in the number for January, which the author rather waggishly styles "a tale," (quære "tail?") thereby hinting that the "latter end" of anti-reformism is at hand!—Passing over the youth and parentage of our hero, let us begin with his college days, and so proceed to the end of the story:—

"I went to college then; my application and my reputation increased. I wrote verses in the albums of the proctors' wives, and love-songs to the eyes of the bishop's daughters. I gained the chancellor's medal and a Trinity fellowship, and was decidedly the most ready speaker of the then existing "Union." Every man who starts with my prospects and in my situation, ought to consider whether he means to belong to "the paid," or the "bought off," *i. e.* whether he should expect a reward for his services, or a bribe for his capabilities to injure. The last course, as it is founded on the most malevolent and therefore the wisest view of human nature, is, I think, the most correct. The delicacy and difficulty of the part it pronounces in favour of, consists in the double necessity of getting your place and keeping your character. Character to a man without a conscience, is what credit is to a man without money—everything; and here's where your adventurer too frequently fails. He imagines propriety of conduct to be of no more consequence with the world than it is with himself, and loses for some paltry trifle the great advantage of a scoundrel, that of being taken for an honest man. My father's example, however, was lucky—my own meditations aided me. I saw that the laying-the-hand-upon-the-heart way was the only graceful and proper manner of

selling oneself. It is done thus:—a question comes on; your mind is not entirely made up; you are most earnest and anxious to be of the minister's opinion. Still—and here follows a long string of objections—after all, however, you are not blind to the advantages on the other side, and you beseech the House to be cautious in forming an opinion. But I am anticipating: my policy in the speaking society at Cambridge was in conformity with that which I had determined upon for a future scene, and every sentence I uttered was framed after the wise and sagacious rule of the Abbé St. Pierre—*“qu'il faut toujours parler son opinion, comme si l'on devoit changer bientôt.”* Finally, I left the University with every requisite, in my own and my contemporaries' opinion, for making a figure in the House—except a seat there. This was to be obtained—but how? there was the difficulty. Machiavel says apropos of Rome, “that the best conceived of our designs depends almost wholly upon Fortune.” Now it so happened, luckily for me, that young Lord Bladno was remarkably ugly, and that he lived on terms of intimacy with a lady of whom the world spoke unkindly. Many persons complimented him on the Bladno property and the beauty of Betsey; but I was the only one of his acquaintance who ever gave him to understand that I thought *him* good-looking, or his mistress virtuous. He grew very fond of me therefore; my society was the only one in which he felt himself happy or at ease; but Lord Bladno was very selfish and very suspicious; and though he had three boroughs, there was little likelihood of his offering me a seat out of pure friendship, and still less of his granting me one if I asked for it as a favour.

“‘My dear Bladno,’ said I, one day, after it had been settled that we should all three go down to Brighton for two months; ‘I am very sorry to say that my father has written to me insisting that I should start to-morrow for the Continent!’

“‘Why, what's the fun of this?’ said Bladno, whose every thought turned upon me, and Betsey, and Brighton—and who spat after speaking of a Frenchman.

“‘Why,’ said I, ‘my father writes very peremptorily; he says that as the elections begin so soon, and there is no chance of my getting into the next parliament, I must begin my travels immediately, so as to return in time to look out for another opportunity.’

“‘A seat in parliament! what, do you want a seat in parliament?’

“‘Not I, at least not now; upon the whole I'd rather travel, only it did annoy me to miss a party we had arranged so pleasantly.’

“‘What if I were to give you a seat?’ said my friend, smiling half suspiciously.

“‘You, Bladno! you are the last man in the world I'd accept a favour from—a favour from a friend! no no! After all, too, it is perhaps, as well for me to travel.’

“‘Nonsense, come to Brighton, and by God I'll return you to parliament; d—n me if I don't.’

“‘But my politics—’

“‘Oh, never mind politics; we shall agree, I dare say.’

“Thus I went to Brighton instead of to Dover, and was very shortly afterwards M. P. for the borough of—

“‘I am here,’ said I, at last, as I looked round the long desiderated benches, on one of which, after anxious inquiry as to which was the least compromising, I prepared to seat myself: ‘I am here,—now let me hear, mark, learn, and inwardly digest. Let me catch the tone—initiate myself into the mystery and the taste—of yonder important personages, by whose fiat my fate is to be decided; and above all, let me carefully weigh the power of the contending parties, and since I have no pledges or principles to embarrass me, trust the full instinct of my nature in discovering the side which is likely to be the strongest. I was very soon convinced that the Whigs, honest and liberal, yet prudent and aristocratic men—politicians who professed to rule without corrupt influence, and who were not disposed to pander to courtly favour, were the least likely to obtain office, and the most certain of speedily losing—if they did obtain it.

“The extreme Radicals might succeed in a revolution, but that was a desperate and distant chance; and then one could hardly be such a fool as to side with those wicked and dangerous persons, one's natural enemies as it were, who professed to cut away pensions and curtail places; in short, to take the bread out of one's mouth. Still there were many shades in Toryism: this was a serious matter to consider about.

“A letter, however, from my father, and some grave cogitations of my own, convinced me that no person can commence his career too illiberally.

“My maiden speech, therefore, was an anti-Catholic one: it was ready, confident, and well delivered; but its peculiar merit was its moderation—the earnest desire it showed to liberate my Catholic brethren, and the difficulty I felt in reconciling myself to those State reasons, which, however, I was convinced, under *present circumstances*, ought to predominate. The success was decided; for the minister congratulated me, and a rival collegian whispered in my ear that I owed all my advantages to my voice.

“My next effort was against the education of the people—there I could not be wrong. If those fellows knew what we were about, a pretty kick-up there'd

be. ‘Why, Sir, such knowledge cannot exist compatibly with the peace of the country—the Church, the Aristocracy, would be in peril.’ This was a lucky hit, and the following morning I was asked whether I'd accept the agency of a colony? I had now a very fair place of 600*l.* a year, and little or nothing to do with it. As to the colony for which I was concerned, I knew no more of it than of the ‘flying island.’ But laying down a good broad principle, I declared every petitioner against grievances, as well as every advocate for change, a seditious and untractable person, and assumed as a fact that the government of Sir Matthew was, both in its fiscal and legislative enactments, the most perfect that prudence, that wisdom, that integrity could suggest. I should have been, however, a very sorry wretch if I had remained satisfied with so paltry an appointment. A place in the India Board was vacant, and to that I lifted the soaring eye of my ambition. But parliament was on the eve of dissolution—I had offended Lord Bladno, who, for the last three years, had been continually murmuring against my change and my ingratitude.

“It is true I had neglected *him*, but *not* my constituents: they consisted of a mayor and twelve resident burgesses, over whom his lordship had an influence, partly arising from property, partly from the long habit of a family connexion. This influence had been formerly sustained by a number of non-resident voters, gentlemen in the county, &c. who could overpower the grocers, linendrapers and lawyers, if they happened to be obstreperous. These persons, however, had died off. Among the twelve resident burgesses then there was a parson, who had been gained by my speech on the Catholic question; a butcher also, with twelve sons, one of whom I had got into the custom-house, as a token of the preferment awaiting the eleven others. The attorney's wife called me a sweet man; for I had promised her an introduction into the best society, whenever she came to London; and the heart of the mayor, a caustic old timber-merchant, was gained by a jar of Lord —'s best snuff.

“At the day of election (fixed and arranged as usual,) Lord Bladno's candidates were proposed—and no opposition of course expected—when the butcher, who by dint of lecturing his numerous family had acquired no contemptible share of eloquence, proposed, in a set speech, that the two former members (one of whom was still Lord Bladno's,) should be again returned; six hands to four were raised in favour of this proposition—two of the burgesses, (tenants, and in arrears of rent,) were *accidentally* absent.

“The question was then put in due form—and the Hon. G. Spitfire, and Benj. Supple, Esq. declared duly elected. This

pleasing intelligence was conveyed to me at the house of a friend in the neighbourhood. Always careful to preserve appearances, I wrote immediately, as it had been agreed upon, to my friend the mayor, stating the pain it gave me to have supplanted my friend Lord Bladno's candidate, in whose favour I would most willingly retire. My answer, declaring I might retire if I pleased, but that the corporation were determined in that case to name Squire Sober, (Bladno's particular aversion,) together with a copy of the letter I had written, were forwarded to Bladno House, with a note expressing my deep regret at what had occurred, of which I certainly should not avail myself, but for the conviction that my nomination would be more agreeable than Mr. Sober's.

"To have beaten a Whig lord in his own borough was no trifling triumph with my political friends; and shortly afterwards having, 'from the force of necessity,' changed my opinions on the Catholic Question, in compliment to Mr. Canning, I received, as an exchange of compliments, the situation I had been desiring.

"I now continued, in the receipt of 1500*l.* a year, during a variety of changes, to fill my situation in parliament with honour to myself and advantage to my country. Mr. Canning, Lord Goderich, the Duke of Wellington, were *all* very able men, and it was a great pleasure to me (considering, if I had done otherwise, my office must have been relinquished) to support them. Thus it was until the 1st of May, 1830. The Rev. Dr. Supple on that day breathed his last, and left me, his sole surviving and disconsolate son, 30,000*l.* (how my dear parent got such a sum I can hardly say) in hard money. His widow, my mother, he recommended to my filial care, and I immediately settled a pension of 80*l.* a year upon her, which was very handsome, since I found her out a boarding-house (in a damp and marshy country to be sure—but then she's not subject to the ague,) where she could have fire and candles included, for 40*l.*

"My large capital now opened to me the most inspiring hopes. 'If,' said I, 'I could purchase the whole property of the borough of—, and thus have lawyer, butcher, and timber-merchant in my sure dependance—then the other member named by me—with my talents, I should be a person of no inconsiderable consequence.' Bladno, who was heartily sick of the whole concern, and had just quarrelled with his cousin, Capt. Spitfire, for certain familiarities with Miss Betsey, was quite willing to come to terms, and, by dint of much artifice and cunning, for a few of the fools hardly liked to sell what they called their independence—I bought up, with my 30,000*l.* the whole borough

and what was more, let out my first seat for 1500*l.* per annum. Two seats in parliament—3000*l.* a year, and great expectations, I flattered myself that I was in the fair way of founding the family of the Supples.

"It would be difficult to paint the ecstasy that danced in my heart when the news arrived of the French Revolution; I fondly gloated over the horrors that would take place there—the guillotine, (splendid contrivance) in the Place de Grève!—and then the fears that would paralyze John Bull—the dread of Robespierre and Danton—perhaps a second twenty years' war, and another Mr. Pitt? Besides I had all the immortal Burke by heart—what splendid material for first-rate speeches! In short every thing was exactly what I wished it; and I amused myself in preparing, against the opening of parliament, such discourses as would be wanted in favour of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, and the recurrence to the worthy Lord Castlereagh's memorable 'Acts.'

"The first thing that astounded, and indeed showed me the frightful and insane state of the country, was the division on the Civil List. I called, however, the next morning on Pahnerston and the Grants, and quarrelled with C—, who, notwithstanding, is a capital fellow, just after my own heart, for asking me to write a song in "John Bull," against the new administration. However it would not do—those Whigs, for once, were not to be humbugged, and my 1500*l.* a year was obliged to be surrendered. Still there was hope—that Reform question was a trap which could hardly fail to catch them. Too great a measure would lose them the House—too small a one would kick them out of the favour of the public. I consoled myself, practised attitudes before my glass, and resolved to crush the d—d fellows on the first opportunity.

"But who can imagine my horror, my ineffable horror and disgust, when on that awful night, never to be forgotten, little Lord John lisped away my 30,000*l.* and the borough of—, without any more regard for me, or for Burke, or the vested rights of our ancient Constitution, than a Brobdignagian would have had in stamping on a Lilliputian. Thank God! H. Twiss gave it him well; and we all of us laughed heartily, though rather on the wrong side of our mouths.

"Then came that division; and a majority of *one*! That our constitution—that my thirty thousand pounds—that the whole fortune of the Supples should have depended upon one miserable individual! And now hardly had General G—given me hopes, when followed the dreadful dissolution! Well might our dear Duke say, 'Who is silly Billy now?' as the guns fired! I confess honestly that I should have despaired, but the vices of the age

and our noble subscription—(by-the-by, what became of that subscription?)—re-assured me. Those pledges on the hustings, however, played the devil with us. I pass over the frightful divisions which succeeded one after the other in so republican a House of Commons. At last we got the execrable Bill among our excellent friends the bishops.—Alas! their pious patriotism will have been exerted in vain! But here's a burning, there's a riot—we may be saved yet. Do, my good friends, be frightened; all these things are caused by that wicked, impious Reform Bill; they are *really*—so is the cholera!

"Hiatus valde deffendus."

* * * * *

"Sunday morning, December 18th.—The division, death and destruction! the division two to one against us. The poor dear—dear constitution! My 30,000*l.*! Is there but one step from the Capitol to the Tarpeian Rock—from a *Boroughmonger* to a beggar! My Lords, I again appeal to you!—be once more firm and resolute! Virtue—Morality—Public happiness—and the Borough of — are all in Schedule A!"

THE SPITALFIELD'S WIDOW.

Nights of the Round Table; or, the Stories of Aunt Jane and her Friends. By the Authoress of "The Diversions of Holly Cot," "Clan Alpin," &c. Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh.

THE title of this very entertaining and instructive volume is sufficiently characteristic of its general contents. We have here seven well-told, homely stories, from which the following specimen must prove acceptable. It is the affecting story of the poor blind widow of a Spitalfield weaver, and runs thus:—

"I was the daughter of a labourer in Essex—one of a large, poor family. I came to London for service, and found it; for Essex girls had a good name, and I was a stirring, likely lass then—I mean for work. I remained in service fifteen years, the last ten of which I spent in your grandmother's nursery—happy and easy years they were; and, indeed, my dear, I have since feared, that young women are only too easy and well off in the families of gentlefolks, and that this sometimes makes them discontented as poor men's wives; yet a home of one's own has many delights too to counterbalance its hardships.

"John Rushton and I were long acquainted; for, though bred a silk weaver, he was an Essex lad originally. We were not rash in marrying young—your grandmother helped to prevent that folly; we were both above thirty, and had put something before hand to begin housekeeping.

Wages were better then, and hours shorter for the poor weaver, though the ladies maybe did not buy their gowns quite so often, nor so cheaply. This was the chamber of our first house, my dear, but we had a large kitchen below; and when your mother, then about your age, brought me that tea-tray, as a marriage gift, on her first visit to Hannah's home, she saw these very same old things you are looking on now, nice things then. I believe, my dear, a poor couple, when they marry, and get a home of their own, are as proud of their room and their goods as e'er a lady and gentleman of their castle, their grounds, and their carriages; and why should they not? I am not seeing it now, but to me this small chamber, many a day, looked a gladsome place. Look round it, my dear; it has held coffins and cradles, and heard the voice of bridal joy, and the groans of sore affliction; the weeping of a bereaved mother, and the feeble wail of an aged widow; but don't look sad, neither—for deep content is here:—the voice of thanksgiving for all, for the grief as well as the joy has been breathed in the watches of the night from this poor chamber. Oh! if it were not so, what a hardened, heartless creature were I, if you knew all the blessings that in a long life I have tasted! This was said in a low, earnest voice; and the widow went on more lightly. 'I had five children; either the air of London, or some fatal constitutional taint, nipt them one by one. No one saw the other save the two younger; and they also drooped, pined, and went at last. I spent more on these infants than was proper for poor folks. Could I retain our little store, or any part of it untouched, and see them pine? But doctors did them but little good. Could I have carried them to a purer air! But, alas! I could not take them to Essex; and I have, indeed, in those days, grudged to see fine, healthy, young women rolling by in coaches, while I sank beneath the weight of the sickly baby which I carried abroad, both of us gasping for a mouthful of fresher air. My own health failed about this time; but I struggled to bear up. Your grandmother lent us a child's little carriage; and on Sundays, when John Rushton had leisure from toil, we alternately dragged our poor pale babies as far off as we could out of London into the country. Oh! how I sighed for the sweet breath of the meadows of Essex for my children! but they were taken to a yet purer air, and I was taught resignation.

"But, ere this, times were become hard with us; a low rate of wages brought on long, weary hours of work; and languor and sickness followed them, and unfitted us for the increased exertion necessary to gain any thing like what my husband had once earned; still we were better off than many of our neighbours; for if our early

store was gone, we had our household goods, and no debts." There was a pause in the narrative, and a low sigh was breathed ere it was resumed.

"John Rushton had shared much joy and grief with me; and now, together, we were to taste of poverty—ay, and of worse evils. Though it be quite true that drinking only aggravates every evil of the poor, He who made us, best can judge of the despair and strong temptation with which my poor man had to contend. He met with his fellows in public-houses to try to better themselves, and mend the times; and I fear they only made themselves worse, and the times no better; for, my dear, unless the parliament could have bought all our silks, and paid us well for them, and taken more from us, what could the parliament do for us? I never loved these meetings, but what could I say?—an industrious and careful man and a kind husband he had been many a day: and it was my part to bear and forbear now. When things were at the worst with us, it pleased God to afflict him with long and sore sickness, and mercifully to show him his folly—indeed he had ever seen it, and bitterly lamented it too; but now he was a sincere penitent, and an amended life proved his contrition. He had laboured hard many a day to maintain me and my children; and now it was my turn to work for him, and to comfort him; and I was blessed in being able to do both. He died on that bed which we had purchased twenty years before, neither obliged to parish nor hospital, in peace and forgiveness with all mankind, and most of all with me. My friends, among whom, my dear, were your own kind relations, I know, thought poor John's death a great blessing for their old Hannah, but they did not say so to her; and, though I could scarcely rejoice even in the release of my poor man from sorrow and suffering, yet I was not so impatient of the hand that afflicted as the affluent widow might have been. Still this was a trial—the greatest of my life. When, after a hard day's work, I returned at night to my poor invalid, there was a kind of happiness in performing my loving service about him. There was a living being waiting and wearying for me to speak comfort to him, and a spark of fire in the little grate;—now all was become silent and desolate; and I thought, if it had been God's will, I would not have exchanged my hard day's work, and the anxious flutter of heart with which I was wont to hasten home then, for the chill torpor and void which weighed on me now. But, my dear, your mother bade me tell you my story, and I am telling you only my own feelings—very idle that; I will keep to the story now. In John's last illness, I had contracted some few debts, for the first time of my life. Sickness, alas! is craving, and capricious in its ap-

petites; and how could I refuse any thing that my credit could procure for him? I sold the few silver teaspoons of which I had once been so proud, and a few other things; but I could not bring myself to part with our good Essex bedding, and these other little useful articles about you; for I had noticed, among my poor neighbours, that, when the room begins to be stripped of its furniture, all comfort, self-respect, and well-doing, fast follow. Alas! pawnbrokers' money goes short way. By hard work, I got clear of all my encumbrances. Providence be blessed! I owed no man any thing when it pleased God to lay me aside." She tried here to lift the palsied arm, as if in devout thankfulness.

"The doctor said I had overworked myself,—and one thing or another. But, to be sure, after losing the use of the limbs, the poor eyes were of less value. I repined, I fear, too much; and coals of fire were heaped on my thankless head; for, from that day when all became to my mind dark and desolate, I have never known want, nor the fear of want."

"Words were breathing on the lips of the pious woman that were not intended for my ear. I cast down my eyes in reverence of her piety, unable to look on those sightless orbs whose power I felt as if they read my inmost heart. 'But you are happy now?' I at last whispered.

"Indeed I am, my dear: nor, excepting under the immediate pressure of affliction, have I ever been much otherwise. At what the world would have called my worst times, I was not very unhappy; for neither gross vice nor absolute want were ever known within our threshold. While my husband lay bedrid, our silk trade was all knocked up; but, luckily, I could turn my hand to several things. I fear it was greediness of fine work, which paid me well, that cost me my eyes. From two families, who needed *charring*, I got constant employment; and there is much kindness ever going about in that world of middle life where the wants of the poor are understood.

"Saturday nights, like this same, went to be a blessed, welcome time to me. My employers were not among the great; but those to whom I had done a faithful week's work, or a day's work, knew I had a bedrid husband to provide for, and often gave me what they could spare,—if not money, yet to me money's worth. No, I was never unhappy,—I had a pleased and grateful feeling, even working on often till far in Sunday morning, washing up our own few things, and cleaning our room after I came late home; and I hope the God, who has said that "He delighteth more in mercy than in sacrifice," forgives me this Sabbath-breach; and also if, instead of going to church in my old bonnet and shoes—I might be too proud—I remained by the side of my poor sick man on my thrice-blessed day of rest, good

thoughts not far from us, even in this lone chamber. No, indeed, my dear, I have never been to call unhappy; and, sitting here alone, with poor Bobby, (her canary bird,) my sole living companion now, and thinking it all over and over, I feel as if the times that still lie nearest and dearest to my heart, and are more sweet than bitter in remembrance, are precisely those which, in passing, seemed my darkest days."

CAPTAIN FRANKLAND'S TOUR.

Visit to the Courts of Sweden and Russia.

By Captain C. Colville Frankland.
2 Vols. Colburn and Bentley.

THESE volumes are announced for publication in a day or two, meantime a few of our author's random sketches of Russian life and society, will be read with pleasure:—

Jewish Religious Ceremony.—"October 5-17—I went with the Codringtons to hear the singing at the imperial chapel. It is the most sublime thing possible; such is the *ensemble* and perfect melody of the voices, that one imagines one's-self transported into heaven. Some of the bass voices were astonishing, and sounded like the prolonged vibration of the great string of a double-bass. The flowing heads of hair, the long beards, and fine vestments of the priesthood, give them a most venerable and imposing appearance; they look like Aaron assisted by the Levites. There was, however, one part of the ceremony which struck me as ludicrous, namely, the bringing in of the leavened bread upon a board, covered up with a white cloth, borne upon the head of one of the officiating priests. It seemed so like a baker and his loaves! He was, moreover, a most ungainly-looking priest, squinting fatally with one eye, which circumstance deprived his countenance of dignity and reverence. The priest who read the service had terribly dirty boots on, and looked as if he had come from a pig-sty."

Russian Society.—"I have often been struck by the want of sociability which exists between the youth of both sexes in the societies of Petersburg. I have frequently asked the reason, both from ladies and gentlemen, of this *éloignement*. The ladies naturally reply, 'We cannot make the advances to the gentlemen, and they will not make them to us. Were it not for you strangers, we should never exchange a word with the male sex.' Again, they say, 'The gentlemen are ungallant and illiterate; their conversation consists in nothing, even if you chance to elicit it. They spend their time in the bureaux of the different establishments, or else on guard—what can they know? What can they say to amuse a gentlewoman?' The men justify themselves in a somewhat similar manner; they accuse the women of too great a partiality for foreigners, with whom, they say, they cannot com-

pete with any chance of success. They say the ladies are absolute negations, and have not a word of conversation beyond the French play and the last ball. But I think I have discovered another motive for this extraordinary distance; it is, that there are too many *grosses épauettes* (or, as we should say, big wigs,) in society, who, as they always wear their uniforms, keep the young men too much in awe. No man has any grade in society in Russia, other than his military (or corresponding civil) rank. A subaltern, or captain, dares not put himself very forward in society, for fear of incurring a rebuke, and a severe one too, from his superior; and of this I have lately heard a remarkable instance, in the person of a young officer of good family, but of low military grade, who was warned by his superior that he was too intimate with a certain beautiful lady, and that he had better take heed and not thrust himself too far out of his sphere, lest the consequences might be painful to him. Conceive the spirit of Martinettism and of the camp being carried into the heart of civilized society, and into the privacy of our tenderest passions and most intimate and dear enjoyments!"

"Oct. 27. (Nov. 8.)—Sunshine and mild. Promenade in the Newsky Perspective, with Tiesenhausen. We met their imperial majesties of all the Russias on foot. The emperor has a disagreeable way of staring a stranger out of countenance."

The Emperor Nicholas.—"His imperial majesty is a remarkably fine looking man, of upwards of six feet in height. His countenance is open and ingenuous, his manner frank, but a little inclining to *brusque*. If I were to see such a man in a crowd, I should say, 'That man is born to be an emperor.' He is thirty-six years of age, and is represented by all those who have access to his person, and who are well acquainted with his character, to be the model of a prince and of a man. His fine physiognomy, is expressive of benignity, magnanimity, and intelligence. He received us in private audience; and as we stood in a sort of semicircle, he went round and addressed something kind and pertinent to our professions and nation, to each of us. He asked me if I had ever seen in India any thing of the cholera: to which I replied, that I had never served in India, but that I had had the complaint commonly called cholera morbus twice in my life, once at Buenos Ayres in South America, and once at Constantinople. His majesty seemed surprised, and asked me how I was treated for it; to which I replied, the first time, simply with barley-water made very sweet, and the second time with syrup of orjeat and water. I remarked, likewise, that the Arabs, who were well acquainted with the cholera, treated it with rice-water and sugar.

'Ah!' said his imperial majesty, 'you have not then had the oriental cholera, but its first cousin; but,' said he, 'your remedy is deserving of notice.' He observed, that he trusted that the measures he had caused to be taken, of quarantine and *cordon sanitaire*, would check the progress of the disorder; but, he added, it is very difficult in Russia to make the people pay obedience to sanitary regulations. 'You in England,' said he, 'respect and obey the law, and enforce quarantine rigorously.' I replied, that I hoped the excellent example set by himself, in performing fourteen days of quarantine, on his return from Moscow, would be productive of good effects. Turning to Capt. N—m, of the Grenadier Guards, he asked him how long he had been in Petersburg, and whom he came with. N—m replied, he had arrived with Sir E. Codrington. 'Oh!' said the emperor, 'I am sorry I did not know that, for I should have had much pleasure in showing you all that I showed him.' He said something kind to the two other gentlemen who were presented with us, and then told us that the empress would be glad to make our acquaintance; said that he hoped to see us often at court, and that we should make a long stay in Petersburg: 'But, of all things,' added he, 'go to Moscow; for there you will see the true Russian character, and the old Russian capital.' He then bowed, and wished us good morning. We were next ushered, by the Count Modène, into the empress's apartments, and had not waited long before her imperial majesty appeared, attended by Count Litta, the grand chamberlain, and Mademoiselle la Comtesse Sophia de Modène, the lady in waiting. Her majesty is tall, fair, and beautiful. She was very gracious, and said that she recommended me to go from Moscow to Odessa, and so on to Constantinople by sea; but when I told her majesty that I had already been at Constantinople, she replied, 'That the English were such great travellers, that it was not easy to point out any new route to them.' We had the honour of kissing her majesty's hand; and at the expiration of a quarter of an hour she withdrew, and so finished our presentation at court."

"Cayley told me a curious anecdote respecting a Baron Sutherland, a capitalist. As it will serve to show how little confidence can be placed in the imperial finance system, I relate it as nearly as I can recollect its import. Baron Sutherland (*père*), a capitalist, had been long in the habit of advancing money and *faisant des affaires* with the court and the government. Suddenly came a war with France, and times of difficulty. The baron received no dividends: reclamations were vain; the answer always was—'Wait a little longer.' In the mean time Sutherland died, and left the affairs unsettled. The

son claimed payment; the minister said, 'There is some mistake in the accounts; send us a fresh estimate of the debt and interest.' It amounted to several millions. 'Oh!' said the minister, 'this is too large a sum to be paid to any individual; we cannot think of doing so.' 'Pay me what you please,' said Baron Sutherland (*filis*.) The minister paid him nothing—not a *sous*. The baron died a beggar, living upon the charity of the English merchants. For some time previous to his decease, he would not move out of the house of Cayley, which had given him an asylum. 'It is not fit,' said he, 'that I should be seen in a country which has made a beggar of a man who ought to be one of the richest and most powerful of the land.'

"Count Ostermann was more remarkable for his love of bears than of the fine arts. It is related of him, that when he gave a great dinner, he used to cause to be placed behind the chairs of his guests a bear, which, thrusting his shaggy head over the shoulder of the *convive*, would growl out his supplications for food, and extend his pawless stumps, (for he was mutilated to prevent mischief,) towards the table. How strange that a man, who ought to have passed his days in the caverns of the Orsine species, should have built and lived in a palace of marble and gold! This is, indeed, barbarous magnificence."

Topographical and Statistical Details of the Metropolis, showing the Population as returned to Parliament at each of the four ten Yearly Periods, 1801, 1811, 1821, and 1831. By J. Marshall. Cochrane and Co.

A LITTLE book of Herculean research and labour, filled with figures and tables, and comprising distinct accounts of all the live stock, and sterling property of all the parishes and districts in and about the metropolis.

Observations on the Law of Arrest. By W. Wordsworth. Maxwell.

THE whole of our laws relating to debtor and creditor are notoriously and radically bad, and the "Bro'om" of reform will, we hope, speedily be brought to put in force its sweeping measure for their reform. The present pamphlet is plainly and forcibly written, and calls for attentive consideration.

The Divines of the Church of England. Vol. 20. *Bishop Hall's Contemplations on the Old and New Testament.* Vol. 3. A. J. Valpy.

THESE volumes should meet with encouragement from every master of a family in England. They are intended to form a complete library of sound religious knowledge, both doctrinal and practical, from the writings of the best and most illustrious members of the established church; and the price at which they are charged is in the economic spirit of the age.

Poetry.

THE GRECIAN MARINER'S SONG.

"Our home is on the sea, boy,
Our home is on the sea—
When Nature gave
The ocean-wave,
She mark'd it for the free.
Whatever storms befall, boy,
Whatever storms befall,
The island bark
Is freedom's ark,
And floats her safe through all.
"Behold you sea of isles, boy,
Behold you sea of isles,
Where every shore
Is sparkling o'er
With Beauty's richest smiles.
For us hath Freedom claim'd, boy,
For us hath Freedom claim'd
Those ocean nests
Where Valour rests
His eagle wing untam'd.
"And shall the Moslem dare, boy,
And shall the Moslem dare,
While Grecian hand
Can wield a brand,
To plant his crescent there?
No!—by our fathers, no, boy,
No! by the cross we show—
From Maina's rills
To Thracia's hills
All Greece re-echoes 'NO!'"
Moore's "Summer Fete."

NEW PATENTS.—Sealed, 1831.

Cordage.—Robert William Sievier, of Southampton Row, Bloomsbury, Middlesex, gentleman, for certain improvements in the making or manufacturing of cables, ropes, whale fishing, and other lines, lathe and rigger bands, bags and purses, part of which said improved articles are applicable to other useful purposes. December 1—six months.

Silk Printing.—Cornelius March Payne, of Stratford, in the parish of West Ham, Essex, silk printer, for certain improvements in printing silk, cotton, and other goods or fabrics. December 15—six months.

Mills.—Claude Marie Savoye, of Oxford Street, Middlesex, merchant, for an improvement or improvements in mills or machines for grinding or reducing grain and other substances. December 15—six months.

Fire-Arms.—Abraham Adolph Moser, of Canterbury Row, Kennington Road, Surrey, engineer, for improvements in certain descriptions of fire-arms. Communicated by a certain foreigner residing abroad. December 15—six months.

Lace.—Thomas Alcock, of the parish of Claines, Worcester, lace manufacturer, for certain improvements in machinery already in use for the manufacture of bobbin net lace. December 15—six months.

Stomachic Medicine.—Isaac Strombom, of Old Broad Street, London, merchant,

for a medicinal composition or embrocation for the cure, relief, or prevention of external and internal complaints, which composition or embrocation may, alone, or with certain alterations, be beneficially used as an internal medicine. December 17—six months.

Screws, &c.—Daniel Ledsam and William Jones, screw manufacturers, of Birmingham, Warwick, for certain improvements in machinery for making pins, rivets, wood-screws, and nails. December 22—six months.

Spinning.—Henry Gore, of Manchester, machine maker, for an improvement in the machines commonly called by the spinners, "throstle machines," and spinning frames, which machines operate by spindles and flyers; and bobbin for spinning or twisting yarn or threads. December 22—six months.

Fancy Cotton.—Pierrepont Greaves, of Chorley, Lancaster, gentleman, for a method or methods of making ornamental or fancy cotton yarns and threads, applicable to the making, sewing, or embroidering cotton and other fabrics. December 22—six months.

Metal Plates.—John Christopher Tobias Kreeft, of Old Bond Street, London, merchant, for an improved apparatus for shaping plates of metal, and for manufacturing various articles therefrom. Communicated to him by Stephen Von Keesz, and Moritz Von Ischoffen, foreigners, residing abroad. December 22—six months.

Steam Engines.—Samuel Hall, of Basford, Nottingham, cotton manufacturer, for an improved piston and valve for steam, gas, and other engines; also an improved method of embricating the pistons, piston rods, and valves or cocks of such engines, and of condensing the steam, and supplying water to the boilers of such steam engines as are wrought by a vacuum produced by condensation. December 22—six months.

Furnaces.—Benedict Nott, of Liverpool, Esq., for certain improvements in the construction of a furnace or furnaces for generating heat, and in the apparatus for the application of heat to various useful purposes, being further improvements upon a patent obtained by the petitioner, dated November 4, 1830. Communicated by a certain foreigner residing abroad. December 22—six months.

Flooring.—Malcolm Muir, of Hutchinson Town, Glasgow, Scotland, engineer, for certain improvements in machinery or apparatus for preparing boards for flooring and other purposes. December 22—six months.

Bedsteads.—Robert Walter Wingfield, of Birmingham, Warwick, brass founder, for certain improvements in the construction of bedsteads, one or more of which said improvements is or are likewise applicable to other articles. December 22—six months.

Fine Arts.

1. *Landscape Illustrations of the Waverley Novels.* Part 20. Tilt.
2. *Landscape Illustrations to Mr. Murray's first complete and uniform Edition of the Life and Works of Lord Byron.* Murray. Tilt.

THESE are two most interesting series of plates, both engraved by the Findens, and bearing ample testimony to their peculiar delicacy and brilliancy of touch. We are glad to see the fine arts thus uniting with their cousins-german—poetry and romance; and the avidity with which such books of prints are sought after and treasured up, may be considered a pleasing evidence of the improvement in the taste of the day.

Of the "Waverley Illustrations," the twentieth and concluding part is now before us, comprising four views; *landscapes* we cannot style them all, for the very first is a quiet, venerable picture of "a Room at Abbotsford," with a variety of armour, stags heads, &c. and an old escritoire, in which the Waverley MSS. was discovered. The other three, viz.:—The town of "Peronne," (Quentin Durward;) "Heriot's Hospital," (Fortunes of Nigel;) and "Niddrie Castle," (The Abbot;) are from drawings by Messrs. Brockedon and Roberts; and if the contents of the preceding parts be on a par with these, they may be safely and advantageously bound up with the various editions of Sir Walter Scott's works.

The "Byron Illustrations" are only commencing their career, which, from their very superior execution, and the cheap rate at which they are offered, must prove extensive and profitable. Mr. Murray seems to have determined, when preparing for this series, that as his noble author was immeasurably beyond all contemporary poets, so his illustrations should surpass in beauty and finish all other illustrations. "Lachin-y-Gair" is a pretty Highland view by Stanfield, illustrative of the well-known lines beginning

"Ah, there my young footsteps in infancy wandered,
My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was the plaid."

"Belem Castle, Lisbon," is effective as a sea and architectural piece, and nothing can surpass the rich mellow tints in the view of "Yanina;" that of "Corinth" is good, and the sketch of "the Maid of Athens," full of beauty, elegance, and softness. But here, again, we must point out the absurdity of limiting the title-page of these series to "Landscape Illustrations," while the subjects demand, and the artists are prepared to supply, plates of every extent and variety. The Portrait selected for the Frontispiece to this edition, representing the poet "at the age of nineteen," in a sailor's jacket and white

trowsers, with a janty but most unintellectual expression, an awkward gait, and a pair of smartly turned feet, is one that has always displeased us, and in our mind adds no attraction to the volume, nor any credit to the poet, or his pourtrayer. We hope Mr. Murray will see the propriety of supplying another portrait as a substitute for this miserable caricature.

Music.

KING'S THEATRE.

"God Save the King" and "Rule Britannia" have been, it is said, newly and most splendidly arranged, and will form a striking feature at the opening of the theatre, on Saturday next. The words will be Italian, which we think a judicious alteration, as nothing can be imagined more ridiculous than the mistaken emphasis occasionally bestowed upon the English version by foreign singers, who were not fully aware of their import and pronunciation. Since a recent edict of his present Majesty against the enormity of whiskers and mustachios, for instance, there can be no need to continue the petition to "Shave our noble king;" and we remember that, in the time of George the Fourth, who was not very remarkable for the slightness of his person, the emphasis of the text was by no means improved by the novel version of an Italian Cantatrice, who prayed for "our no-belly king," as she was pleased to style him!

Drama.

DRURY LANE.

Friday.—The Brigand; the Bride of Ludgate; Harlequin and Little Thumb.

Saturday.—My own Lover; the Pantomime.

Monday.—Macbeth; the Pantomime.

Tuesday.—Rob Roy; the Pantomime.

Wednesday.—My own Lover; the Pantomime.

Thursday.—Love in a Village; the Pantomime.

COVENT GARDEN.

Friday.—Rob Roy; Hop o' my Thumb.

Saturday.—Fra Diavolo; the Pantomime.

Monday.—Romeo and Juliet; the Pantomime.

Tuesday.—Old and Young; the Pantomime; the Miller and his Men.

Wednesday.—Catherine of Cleves; a Day after the Wedding; the Pantomime.

Thursday.—The School for Scandal; the Pantomime.

WE must own that we returned from the performance of Lord Leveson Gower's long-talked-of tragedy, on Wednesday last, sorely disappointed, and more than ever confirmed in our opinion that the drama will not revive amongst us till some stirring and hearty reform calls its latent energies into action. That a miserable, half-starved, and ill-paid farce writer should greedily seize upon every commonplace bagatelle as *materiel* for his handicraft is natural enough, and, in the present state of things, almost pardonable; but, that a gentleman—aye, a noble lord!

and one who, though a lord, has courted with tolerable success the honours, if not the profits, of poetry—should have the conscience to work his tender muse to death in the absurd extravagances of a French romantic vaudeville, and call it "tragedy," is really incomprehensible and melancholy to reflect upon. The poor farce-contriver has also to contrive for the satisfying of his fleshy appetites, and are not all things pardonable to a hungry man? The noble lord can surely have had in view but the one unalloyed object—GLORY, yet what glory, what renown can he expect to gain from this performance? The unhappy farce-writer stands before us confessedly brainless, and with "no speculation" in his pate—the man who lays claim to poetry should at least carry sufficient tact or invention about him to start his Pegasus on his airy road, and rein him in the flight.

Of the poetry in *Catherine of Cleves* we do not pretend to speak, having been seated at too great a distance from the stage, to hear more than six consecutive words. Some notion of the merits of this production may be drawn, however, from the fact, that the loudest applause of the audience was lavished upon certain situations and incidents, both numerous and striking, the "dumb eloquence" of which appeared to be more generally understood than the dialogue. Now for the plot:—

De Megrin (Mr. C. Kemble) is deeply enamoured of *Catherine of Cleves*, being at the same time the deadliest enemy of her husband, the haughty and malicious *De Guise*. *Catherine de Medicis*, who wishes to foment the hatred between these two men, of whom *De Megrin* is the favourite of *Henry III*, encourages the illicit flame, through the arts of her creature, the renowned astrologer, *Ruggieri*, to whose oracles the highest spirits in France, according to the custom of the age, yield implicit credence. *De Megrin* alone ridicules the glorious science, until its professor, to his astonishment, whispers to him of his passion for *Catherine of Cleves*, and of her secret affection, in return, for him, shewing him the image of his mistress in a magic glass, and again, reposing, in *propria persona*, on a couch, the lady herself, who, through the management of *De Medicis*, had been conveyed, while under the influence of a sleeping-draught, to the astrologer's apartment. *Catherine* wakes, but thinking herself in a dream, tells her love to the supposed spirit of *De Megrin*. The reality overwhelms her with confusion;—she denies her unwitting avowal, and an interesting interview is only put an end to by the arrival of *De Guise* himself to consult the planets. *Ruggieri* conceals the lady; and *De Megrin*, after a few words of sarcasm and hostility with his enemy, leaves him in possession of the magic room, where discovering his wife's handkerchief, his jealousy is roused,

and he hurries off to his palace, to make certainty more sure, and accomplish his revenge. In the next act we have a scene in the palace, where *De Megrin* and *Guise* are again brought into hostile collision, and this is succeeded by one of great power in the chamber of *Catherine*, whither the enraged *Duke* coming, commands her, on pain of death, to write a billet, inviting her lover to come to her apartment after midnight. Neither the threat of sword or poison can compel her to lend herself to an artifice which she knows must end in his murder; but the torture of the gripe of *Guise's* mailed hand overcomes her firmness, and the note is despatched by her favourite page (Miss Taylor). In the third act *De Megrin*, after hearing and despising various evil auguries of his friends, proceeds to his supposed assignation. He gains the apartment and presence of his mistress, where the dreadful revelation of the snare into which he has been betrayed awaits him, and where, in the agony of the moment, *Catherine* acknowledges the love which before she had repressed and discouraged. Meantime the steps of her husband and his bravos approach, and escape appears out of the question, when a ladder of ropes is thrown in at the open window from the hand of the faithful page. *Catherine* urges *De Megrin* to descend, and in order to give him more time to escape, boldly thrusts her arm through the iron loop-handles of the door, which the murderers are forcing from without.—They enter—a disturbance is heard from below,—the *Duke* malignantly enquires how the murderous work proceeds, and, hearing that *De Megrin*, though pierced with twenty wounds, still breathes, throws his handkerchief out of window, bidding them pass it about his neck.—*Catherine* drinks poison, and dies, asserting her innocence to her husband, who, forgetting all his sternness and revenge, curses himself, and falls upon his knees.

This is all done in three acts, and except that it ends with a most villainous profusion of deaths, this piece has no claim to the title of tragedy. Melodrama it is of the most stirring kind. Some of the incidents are romantic and striking, some are very silly, and two others, those in which *De Guise* crushes the wrist of *Catherine*, and where the latter gets her arm broken, as broken it inevitably must have been, in the door-loops, were almost too painfully disgusting for endurance, and met with tardy applause,—the audience seemed to be making up their minds whether they should take offence or not, and each waited for his neighbour's sanction. We must say, that we considered the author highly to blame in concluding his play so soon, when such admirable materials were at hand to supply the "legitimate" fourth and fifth acts. *De Megrin* with the charmed sword presented to him

by the king, which was to protect his life against steel and fire, and with twenty gaping wounds which, consequently, did him no hurt—and his lover *Catherine* with her arm out of joint!—what awful interest was in preparation for their future adventures, when our author dissolves the charm, and cuts the Gordian knot, by strangling his hero, and poisoning his heroine as aforesaid!

The actors all did their parts ample justice,—their individual merits we have not space to particularize,—and the play was given out for repetition by Charles Kemble, (who we are glad to see looking so well,) with applause unmixed; we are positive of this—the slightest expression of a contrary feeling would have made itself distinctly audible.

THE MINORS

HAVE not been inactive during the past few days. A new burletta at the Olympic, facetiously entitled *He's not A-Miss*, has been the most decided "hit" of the week, and successful novelties have appeared at other places of amusement. A new theatre, too, is rearing its head in the Strand, under the auspices of Mr. Broad, the architect, and Mr. Rayner, the clever comic performer; the curtain of which is expected to rise for the first time in a night or two. We wish them all success, but must now make room for the remainder of the clever article on "The Sock and Buskin," in *Fraser's Magazine*, which we made use of on a former occasion:—

"The solicitors of the patentees have issued a notice to all the managers and performers of the minor theatres, declaring their intention to prosecute every body 'who shall either act in, or cause to be acted, any interlude, tragedy, comedy, opera, play, farce, or other entertainment of the stage, or any part or parts therein, without the authority or license mentioned in the act of 10 Geo. II. c. 28.' In other words, that it is their intention to close all the minor theatres; for, by this act, singing and dancing is alone permitted at these theatres, as at White Conduit House, Bagnigge Wells, the Pig and Whistle, and the like places.

"Now, the men of the minors, seeing that their very existence was aimed at by this act, held a meeting on Christmas eve, for the purpose of considering how they could best defend themselves against these dramatic burkers. Several speeches were made; and although the ridiculous is mingled in them largely, they do yet contain much sound sense and convincing argument. Passing over the praises these poor fellows lavished upon their own profession, character, and condition, upon which they eloquently expatiated with most apparent self-gratulation, forgetful of the Vagrant Act, we will quote some of their remarks, which we deem worthy of observation, and append thereto a brief comment.

"Mr. Rayner, after stating that Lord Brougham observed, from the chancery bench, that he should recommend to his majesty to interfere as little as possible with the amusements of his people, and that the king himself had declared the minor theatres legal by his munificence in granting a sum of money for the performances at every minor theatre on the evening of his coronation, and at the period, too, when the patentees were proceeding against them for illegality, proceeded to demonstrate that a great number of persons would be condemned to starvation by the closing of the minor theatres; and then went on to show the absurdity of suffering the large theatres to monopolize a privilege which they did not use. 'Suppose (said he) some absolute enactment of the darker ages had given the privilege of selling bread to only two great bakers of this great city, with the power of shutting all the other shops, or allowing them only to deal in some inferior article, while they retained the power of nauseating the public with any adulterated material they might think proper to vend—would the public bow down with submission to it when a portion of poor mechanics are out of employ? Would you shut up the doors of those who are willing to employ at a loss, rather than increase the number of the starving?'—Another orator observed, very truly, that it was impossible to play any of our old tragedies or comedies at the patent theatres with a greater show of talent than might be found in a barn. Covent Garden seemed sunk so low, that he did not deem it worthy of mention; but at Drury Lane, he remarked, 'the poetry of the drama was reduced to *Hyder Ali*, the energy to an emaciated lion, and the force to a half-starved tigress.' (Loud applause.) Rayner, however, having pleaded the cause of the play-actors, next became the advocate of the play-wrights. He argued, that if the minors were closed, and all competition checked, the patentees would have their dramas translated by steam, instead of by manual labour, and according to contract, as at present. Poole, and Planché, and Kenney, and the rest, would be sent to starve with the peniless 'minors.' They could not eat paving stones, and MacAdam is removing these indigestible materials so speedily from the metropolis, that, before long, they could hardly secure a decent meal, even had they the power to masticate the same.

"This is all very true. We do not, however, care much for these fellows; they are runaway tailors; they should have stuck to the needle and thimble, and applied the scissors only to the rag in its simple state—sedulously avoiding it from the moment it was converted into paper, and marked with French ink. But, nevertheless, the orator had good reason to inveigh against the conduct pursued by ma-

nagers with respect to dramatic *littérateurs*. We speak not of authors; for none, under the present system of theatrical management, could exist. We admit it is necessary that the stage-manager should be an actor. No man who had not been bred within the stench of the lamps, no man who was not acquainted with the character of his *caste*, could possibly fill the place for a week. The petty rascalities wherewith he has to deal would infallibly drive him mad in any longer period. But although it be necessary that the subordinate functionaries in a theatre should be actors, as it is desirable that similar persons in the police should be converted thieves, yet surely nothing can be more objectionable than to have an actor chief manager, or a branded thief the minister of police.

"It would occupy us too long to dilate upon the impolicy of raising a *Vidocque* to a supreme station, where he would have an opportunity in indulging in all his foul propensities and evil passions, but we may remark that, independent of the narrow considerations of personal interest, and pride, and favouritism, upon which an actor must, from his nature, conduct a theatre, it is most ruinous to the drama—a branch of national literature always interesting—that a comedian should be allowed to decide upon the merits of works submitted for representation at the theatre. Gil Blas, marking the overweening insolence of these *καθίσματα* of society throughout the world, towards the poet Pedro de Moya, and hearing their unanimous condemnation of his comedy, was lost in amazement when it chanced to have *un très grand succès*; but he soon learned on all hands, 'Qu'on applaudissait ordinairement les pièces nouvelles dont les comédiens n'avaient pas bonne opinion, et qu'au contraire, celles qu'ils recevaient avec applaudissemens, étaient presque toujours sifflées.' Players are incapable of judging, even if they could bring dispassionate and disinterested minds to the consideration; but surely this they could never do. Mr. Manager, when a new piece comes before him, has first to consider the interest of the great Snooks or Figgins, (or whatsoever else he may be himself named.) Has he a character which shall eclipse all others except one, and is that one suited to his daughter Judy, or his wife Molly, or his son Augustus, or his mistress Laura, or his mistress's daughter, the beautiful Lucinda? It is all as he could wish—*c'est charmant*! But whence does it come? Is it from one of his own *lick-spittle littérateurs*, who translate to order, and charge by the yard? It is. Ha! well, then, by the time the mechanic has, for the benefit of the managerial stars, turned the dialogue into a worse dialect of English than that in which it was originally presented, it may be played. But if it be a contribution from any body excepting a familiar, ano-

ther fate awaits it; (all things sent, we presume, are adaptations.) If it happen to give promise, on a cursory perusal, Brown, Jones, or Robinson the familiar, is sent for, and ordered to read the stranger's drama, to procure the original, and forthwith construct a piece. It is finished, rehearsed, and, on the eve of its announcement for representation, the stranger's drama is returned to him, with a complimentary note, containing a flattering critique upon his work, and expressing deep sorrow that Mr. Snooks cannot venture to produce it. Diffident of his own abilities, he considers Mr. Snooks a very sensible and gentlemanly man for two days; but on the third he sees a version of the foreign play (which Mr. Snooks did not consider it possible to naturalize) announced at the foot of the bills, in large red letters, for performance on Wednesday next: the principal characters by Mr. Snooks, and Miss Judy Snooks. He curses man, swears that

'His life is all a cheat;
His smiles hypocrisy—his words deceit;',
and so forth; but, in a moment after, he remembers that he was dealing not with a man but an actor. And he dismisses the vagabond from his thoughts with the same feeling you kick a cur dog down stairs. You wonder your temper could be chafed by an animal so perfectly contemptible.

"Another 'minor' orator, Mr. Searle, displayed at great length the vices of the present system, and held up to just indignation the conduct of those heartless persons who, to maintain themselves in a factitious elevation, would reduce more honest, more industrious, and more talented fellow-creatures to beggary. Searle said:—'It was true that the destruction of this monopoly might be injurious to those who had neither sufficient talent nor assiduity to secure the public support, but who were maintained in an undue elevation by a system of favouritism and intrigue. They (he heard) had dared to conspire together, and put down their money to put down the minor theatres; and why should these not, in like manner, confederate to protect their own just rights? And he could only say, that if the persons to whom he alluded persevered, they might expect retaliation. They might depend upon it their names would be published, and that they would be hissed whenever they appeared.' With this intimation from one whose kindly and generous feelings as a player will doubtless induce him to keep his word, we take leave of all wives, daughters, and mistresses of managers, and patronising peers, wishing them, in common with all other individuals connected with the drama, rewards in proportion to their deserts, during the ensuing year. And huzza for 1832; in which, if reform is to come, we

shall take care it be not confined to St. Stephen's."

We shall next week take notice of some remarks on the other side of the question in a contemporary Magazine.

Miscellanea.

Oliver Cromwell.—It is said that the Protector, on the evening of the execution of king Charles, went, muffled up in a long black cloak, into the room at Whitehall in which the body of the unfortunate king lay, and walked round and round the corpse, speaking to himself,—*"Dreadful necessity!"*

A Tall Romeo.—On Miss O'Neill's first representation of *Juliet*, at Crow-street, Dublin, the following ludicrous circumstance occurred:—The balcony, in the garden scene, was particularly low, and Conway, who was the *Romeo*, was as particularly tall; and in delivering the lines, "Oh, that I were a glove upon that hand, That I might touch that cheek,"

he laid his hand upon the balcony. A fellow in the gallery immediately roared out, 'Get out wid your blarney; why don't you touch it then, and not be preaching Parson Saxe there!'

Origin of Pantomimes.—Pantomimes owe their birth, in this country, to a dancing-master at Shrewsbury of the name of Weaver. The first produced was at Drury-lane theatre, in the year 1702, and was called "*The Tavern Bilkers*," which, as might be premised from its elegant denomination, died after five nights' performance. Owing to the entire failure of the first, no other was produced until the year 1716, when the same inventor brought forward a second at the above theatre, called "*The Loves of Mars and Venus*." This succeeded beyond the author's expectations, and occasioned that great critic, Sir Richard Steele, to write the following lines:—

"Weaver, corruptor of this present age,
"Who first taught silent sins upon the stage."

While we are on this subject, we may mention that, in the year 1716, the proprietor Rich, taking advantage of the vitiated taste of the town, engaged a German of the name of Swartz, who brought with him from France *two dogs*, who amused the refined audience by dancing the *Louvre* and the *Minuet*, and continued to do so for a long time, producing considerable profit to the proprietor; when, the fine acting of Booth in *Othello*, and of many others, did not even clear the expenses of the house.

This much corresponds with the past and present time, save and except that neither the lions nor tigers, nor the French translations, did, or do, exclude the "*stars*" now existing, as we cannot, unfortunately, perceive any in the dramatic hemisphere. S. F.—y.

Guardian's Literary Intelligence.

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